

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01
 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
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R 011317Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4859
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 1416

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, GY

SUBJECT: GUYANA-RECORD SPRING RICE HARVEST

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 828 (B) GEORGETOWN 500

SUMMARY: THE MID-SPRING RAINS THAT BROKE GUYANA'S DROUGHT CAME IN TIME TO PRODUCE A RECORD FIRST (SPRING) RICE CROP OF 84,000 TONS ACCORDING TO AGRICULTURE MINISTER, AND WEATHER CONDITIONS REMAIN IDEAL FOR SECOND (FALL) CROP. ALTHOUGH CONTRIBUTION OF RICE TO GUYANA'S TOTAL EXPORTS WILL RISE THIS YEAR, REVENUES WILL BE APPLIED TO OVERDUE DEBTS FOR IMPORTS IT HAS ALREADY RECEIVED FROM CARICOM PARTNERS, PARTICULARLY TRINIDAD. END SUMMARY.

1. GOG AGRICULTURE MINISTER GAVIN KENNARD HAS ANNOUNCED RECORD SPRING RICE HARVEST OF 84,000 TONS. PREVIOUS HIGHEST FIRST CROP WAS 61,000 TONS IN 1975,
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SAME YEAR IN WHICH GUYANA PRODUCED RECORD 175,000 TON TOTAL HARVEST.

2. GOG OFFICIALS BEGAN PREDICTING SUCCESSFUL CROP OF 80,000 PLUS TONS IN LATE APRIL AFTER LONG DRY SPELL ENDED IN TIME TO NURTURE CROP. SECOND REASON FOR HIGH YIELD IS NEW VARIETY "N" HYBRID RICE.

EARLIER UNOFFICIAL PRESSIMISTIC FIRST CROP ESTIMATES, AS LOW AS 30-40,000 TONS (REPORTED REFTELS) WERE BASED ON POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUED DROUGHT AND ALSO OBSERVATIONS THAT SPECIAL CAMPAIGN UNDERTAKEN LAST FALL BY GUYANA RICE BOARD TO PLACE OVER 100 PUMPS AND IRRIGATORS IN DRY FIELDS IN KEY LOCATIONS WAS TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE. BY MID-SPRING, HOWEVER, IT WAS APPARENT THAT RAINS COMPENSATED FOR FAULTS IN IRRIGATION SYSTEM AND PUMPING EQUIPMENT WAS REASONABLY WELL LOCATED.

3. WEATHER CONDITIONS REMAIN IDEAL FOR CULTIVATION OF SECOND CROP, WITH REPORTEDLY 70 PERCENT OF ALL PLANTING ALREADY COMPLETED. THERE IS REAL POSSIBILITY THEREFORE, OF ACHIEVING RECORD TOTAL HARVEST IN 1977 WITH SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER TONNAGE THAN 1975 RESULTS. WITH EVEN MILDLY SUCCESSFUL SECOND CROP, EXPORTS CAN BE INCREASED AND PERCENTAGE OF DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION, AVERAGING APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT IN RECENT YEARS (AND HIGHER IN 1976) SHOULD DECLINE.

4. THOUGH CONTRIBUTION OF RICE INDUSTRY TO GUYANA'S TOTAL EXPORTS MAY RISE THIS YEAR, RICE WILL NOT BRING IN A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE. ALL RICE EXPORTS ARE SCHEDULED TO GO TO CARICOM COUNTRIES AND GUYANA'S DEBTS FROM IMPORTS FROM THE UNCLASSIFIED

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REGION, MAINLY OIL FROM TRINIDAD, WILL HAVE TO BE PAID FROM THESE EARNINGS. BLACKEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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